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S E R M O N  
P R E A C H E D

U P O N

The XXX<sup>th</sup>. of *January* S. V. 168<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.

A T

P A R I S

In the Chappel of the Right Honourable the Lord Vicount PRESTON,

*His MAJESTIE'S*

Envoy Extraordinary in the Court

O F

F R A N C E.

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(w. w.).

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Moses Pitt*, at the *Angel* in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1685..

A

SERMON

PREACHED

AT THE

PARISH

OF THE

ST. MARTIN

IN THE

FRANCIS

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T O  
The Right Honourable  
RICHARD  
LORD VICOOUNT  
PRESTON,

*His Majesty's Envoy Ex-  
traordinary in the Court*

O F  
FRANCE.

My Lord,

**H** Ad I no other consideration  
in the publishing of this  
Discourse, than to make  
an open acknowledgment of my duty

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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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to your Lordship, (and not be silent at a time when the Applauses of the most indifferent Persons declare their satisfaction at your continuance of that character, which none can better sustain, nor has any ever born it with greater Honour and Fidelity, than all men must confess your Lordship to have done it) I should think it sufficient to outweigh all those Censures, which perhaps may pass, with security enough, both upon me and It.

[ It was not to be doubted, but that a Prince so Wise to understand, so Gracious to reward the services of the meanest of his Subjects, would have a particular regard to a Merit and Loyalty great as your Lordship's; and not so soon part with a Minister,



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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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*Minister, whom he knows to have been such, as others promise they will be. It is the Vanity of most men to speak great things, it is your Lordship's Honour that you do them: And I may without danger of any censure, but your own, truly say, That in a Station which affords, if any other, tryals and opportunities to exercise the highest abilities, you have exceeded not only your own Promises, but even our Hopes, and given us an Assurance that there is nothing now remaining that can equal the greatness of your Mind.*

*Permit me, my Lord, to render this short testimony to your Vertues, so far from flattery, that those who know your Lordship, will confess it to be hardly the truth; and if you*

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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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please pardon my presumption in this address, I believe as unexpected to your Lordship, as I can justly say it was undesigned by me.]

But, my Lord, it has been thought fit to give your Lordship this satisfaction, that whilst you are rendering your Obedience to his Majestie's Commands in England, we have not been less careful, both to shew our selves, and to exhort others to be as firm to their Loyalty here: and since we could not have the Honour of your presence to compleat the utmost Solemnity of this Day amongst us, by this Address at least to joyn you in our service, and return our acknowledgments for that Opportunity we have had under your protection, to remember the captivity of Zion in a strange Land.

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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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The only thing that might justly have deterr'd me from this attempt, was the meanness of the performance, did I not consider that Saints and Martyrs (like that God before whom they stand) are not so much taken with the Elegant composures of their Votaries, as with their Piety and Sincerity; and accept him who brings an honest heart, rather than an accurate Discourse to their Memories.

And this, my Lord, were the Sermon it self silent, yet the Honour I have to belong to your Lordship, would undoubtedly confirm to as many as have ever known your character. May your Lordship long have the happiness to continue your services to his Sacred Majesty and the Royal Family, and encrease every day those applauses

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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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*applauses that are so justly paid to  
your great Vertues ; whilst I still  
endeavour by all the duties of my  
employ, more and more to deserve  
that Title I most desire , of being,  
with all humble duty and respect,*

**My Lord,**

**Your Lordship's**

**Most faithful and most  
devoted Chaplain  
and Servant,**

*W. W.*

**ECCL.**

**JOEL II. 15, 16, 17.**  
 Blow the Trumpet in Zion, sanctifie a Fast,  
 call a solemn Assembly. Gather the People:  
 sanctifie the Congregation: assemble the El-  
 ders: gather the Children, and those that  
 suck the Breasts: let the Bridegroom go  
 forth of his Chamber, and the Bride out of  
 her Closet. Let the Priests, the Ministers of  
 the Lord, weep between the Porch and the  
 Altar, and let them say, Spare thy People, O  
 Lord, and give not thine Heritage to re-  
 proach; that the Heathen should rule over  
 them: wherefore should they say among the  
 People, Where is their God?

**S**O contrary is the mournful Ap-  
 pearance of this day, to those  
 Triumphs and rejoycings where-  
 with our Primitive Predecessors were  
 wont to celebrate the Memories of their  
 Martyrs, that either the Spirit of Chri-  
 stianity seems very much decayed in Us,

or something must be thought to have been defective in that Saint, whose death we thus Lament, instead of magnifying his Conflicts, and glorying in his Victory.

Indeed had we only to commemorate the Merits of the Martyr, the Innocence and Piety wherein he lived, and the Constancy and Magnanimity with which he died, these funeral Obsequies would be very unbecoming the Solemnity of our Remembrance: and we might esteem it a Crime to let our Hymns and our Praises fall any thing short of the most celebrated Festivals of the Saints of old; when both the Excellence of the Cause, and the Resolution of the Person, and the Barbarity of his Sufferings, so far exceeded the most of theirs.

And this Perhaps the Generations to come may think themselves obliged to do: But alas! the return of this day brings with it another, and sadder Remembrance

membrance to us; and when our Tongues would speak the Glories of this Martyr, our Consciences confound us with horror to consider, that we our selves were his Persecutors.

Had the death he suffered been the Sin of some other hand, had an Infidel Nation risen up against him, or had the Chance of War cut him off in our own, we might have regretted the loss of so Royal a defender, but should soon have turned our Sorrow into Joy, and have giving him a name Superiour to the chiefest of those Hero's that Fabulous Antiquity can boast of. But that we who were obliged by all the ties of God and man to obey him, should destroy that life, for which we ought not to have refused any Hazard of our own; that we who were certainly his Subjects, and who pretend to be Christians too, should violate all the rights of Majesty; trample under foot all the Commands of that Gospel, by which we are called;



and imbrue our hands in Royal and Innocent Blood, after so barbarous a manner, that no Antiquity can afford a Parallel; This raises those Clouds that obscure so bright a day; and instead of appearing at his Monument with Songs of Eucharist for his Victory, calls us here, between the *Porch* and the *Altar*, to confess our own sins.

Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not this *Heritage* to reproach; that the *Heathen* should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the People, Where is their God?

And here, would to God the Sincerity of our Repentance might in some degree, answer the heinousness of our sin. That our Piety this day, might as effectually contribute to the appeasing, as the Violence committed on it has too fatally concurred to the kindling Gods anger against Us. That as our Church, so far from being involved in the Guilt, that she partook in all his Sufferings, has nevertheless



vertheless provided, by an annual return of this day, to remember that sin, which neither We, nor our Posterity, shall ever be able sufficiently to lament; so may We as sincerely observe, as she has piously established the Fast; and speak at least our detestation of the Sin, if we cannot atone the greatness of the Guilt.

It is not necessary that I should enter on any curious Enquiry into the Occasion of this Prophecy, to apply it to our present assembling at this time: that which may be seen of it at the first View is sufficient to approve my choice, That the *Jews* by their sins had provoked God's Anger against them, and had already felt in great measure his Punishments too. The Famine consumed them; the drought burnt up their Ground; the remainder of their increase the Worm and the Caterpillar consumed. In a word, they were brought down to the very Brink of Destruction, and had only remaining this solemn manner of repentance, to appease

pease his Anger, and to prevent their ruin.

I hope there is no one so little sensible of those Evils, our own Nation has labour'd under, that I need enter on a Remembrance so fresh and so ungrateful. The Wounds are scarce yet closed, which our own hands have given us; and the repose we even now enjoy, seems rather an Interval lent us by Heaven to see if we will yet repent, than any firm and established Peace. Our fears have again been awaked at new Attempts, and we have had but too just Cause to apprehend, if not *Joel's Famine of Bread*; yet what is infinitely worse, *Amos's Famine of the Word among us*: let us therefore as we have transcribed the Example of these *Jews*, both in our Sins and in our Punishments, so take now the advice of the Prophet, as spoken to our selves; it may be yet to redress and to secure all.

*Blow the Trumpet in Sion: sanctifie a Fast,*  
&c. Our

Our Text naturally resolves its self into these three heads of discourse, and every one so proper to our present Consideration, that I shall not be able to pass by any.

*First: the Nature of that Fast, which the Prophet here proposes to be observed by us; Blow the Trumpet in Sion: call a solemn Assembly.*

*Secondly: the manner how we ought to prepare for it; Sanctifie the Fast.*

*Thirdly: The Method of celebrating of it; Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, Weep between the Porch and the Altar, and let them say, Spare thy People, O Lord.*

I begin with the first of these;

I. The Nature of that Fast, which the Prophet here proposes to be observed by us; *Blow the Trumpet in Sion: call a solemn Assembly.* So

So exactly correspondent is the Establishment of this Holy day to the Prescription of our Text, that it might almost be imagined, that our Church had taken not only the Authority of the Prophet to establish the Fast, but even the particulars of his advice for her direction how to do it.

If first we consider the Original of this Fast ; Ours, as well as His, is established by *Publick Authority*. The Trumpet has Num. 10. 2. *sounded from Zion*, and the Voice of it is gone out into all the Corners of our *Israel*. 'Tis our Obedience to this call that draws us from our Closets to the Congregation, and makes our mourning now as publick and solemn, as both our own Piety, and the sad occasion, would otherwise have rendred it great and sincere.

Secondly, for the *Extent* of it, Ours, as well

well as His, is *Universal*: no Quality, no Sex  
no age exempt : Not the Bridegroom ex-  
cepted in the days of his Feasting ; nor  
the Bride to accomplish the *Week* of her Gen. 29. 27  
rejoycing. From the Elders of our Tribes,  
to the least Child in our Houses, all are  
called to this Fast , and 'tis to be hoped  
that every one will be as ready to obey  
their Call, as our Governours have been  
carefull to proclaim it to us.

*Lastly* ; for the *Uniformity* and *Solemnity*  
of this Fast, we have our form too pre-  
scribed wherein to keep it ; And though  
our Offering be more large, and exten-  
ded to those particulars, which our sins  
have occasioned, yet is the Summ of all  
the very same, which the Holy Prophet  
commanded the *Priests*, the *Ministers*  
of the Lord, to weep between the *Porch* and the  
*Altar* ; and say, Spare thy People, O Lord, and  
give not thine *Heritage* to reproach ; that the *Hea-*  
*then* should rule over them : wherefore should  
they say among the People, *Where is their God ?*

Such is the Parallel of this day, with the Pattern of that Fast which the Prophet *Joel* prescribed in our Text; and sure nothing could have been more applicable to the Circumstances of our own.

First, for the Authority of its Establishment; What could have been imagined more proper to appease the anger of Heaven for Faults committed by an usurped and pretended Power, than so solemn a Repentance prescribed by the lawful and true one? Long had the Trumpet been blown to War and to Rebellion; the Church become militant; and our Pulpits, instead of setting forth the Gospel of Peace, spoke nothing but Wars, and Seditions, and Tumults to the People. It became us certainly at last to sound it to some other blast; and remember, that God had appointed the *Priests* a more proper use of the Trumpet, to assemble the *Congregation* to serve the Lord, than

than always to give the *Alarum* to the Battle to destroy their Enemies. This publick Testimony of Sorrow, was the only Act that could have been opposed to the Iniquity of those Ordinances, that so many years involved us in ruin and Confusion. And our Courts of Justice, in which such numbers of Loyal and Innocent Persons have heretofore been condemned, though they can never make us a Satisfaction equal to their Crimes, yet seem at least in the Establishment of this day, to speak their Repentance for it: and by the Authority they have given to this publick Sorrow, would appear not only to beg it of Us, but even to intreat us to intercede with Heaven too for their forgiveness.

*Secondly, for the universality of this Fast;* what less could have been done, than when all the Nation were involved in the Guilt, to join them all in the Repentance for it? I shall not need to say, that



they were our pretended Representatives at least that were the Authors of this Murder, and that they did it too *in the name of the People of England*. And however so notorious was the Violence, that not only the open Royalist, but even many of their own Faction, secretly regretted the Villany they committed; yet still, so many consented to it; of the rest, so many did nothing, or at least not so much as they might, and ought to have opposed it; and even those who most attempted to prevent it, yet by their sins and their Impieties, fought so much more powerfully against their Sovereign, than all their Arms could do to promote his Cause, that even They may too much be charged as the Authors of our Misery; and so all of us seem to have conspired to have made the Crime of this day, in the utmost Propriety of the Phrase, a National Sin.

*Lastly; for the Form prescribed, wherein to speak forth our Sorrow and to implore*



plore our pardon ; as it was the Piety of our Governours, that with one Voice, as well as one heart, we should all join in this great Rogation ; so may it appear too no improper manner for the Solemnity of this day above all others, that *the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord*, should by the Uniformity of a set and well composed Liturgie, at one for the Rudeness and irreverence, I wish I could not say for the rash and almost blasphemous Offerings of those *uncommissioned Teachers* ; who by the unpremeditated Nonsense of their Prayers, no less profaned the Honour of God, than by the Pulpit Wildfire of their Sermons, they ruined both the Peace of his Church, and the Majesty of his Anointed.

And now when such has been the Piety of our Governours, to establish the Fast, and our own engagements are so great to join in the Observation ; 'twill be time for us next to consider, how we are to do it ; that as they have *Blown the Trumpet.*

*Trumpet in Zion, so may we provide to sanctifie the Fast.*

This therefore brings me to the Second part of this discourse,

II. The manner how we ought to prepare for it; *Sanctifie the Congregation, &c.*

The Word in the Original, which our Text twice renders to *Sanctifie*, in its own Nature seems to signifie no more than to *Prepare*: And in that great Passage of *Exod. XIX.* When God commands *Moses to sanctifie the People against the third day*, that he intended to come down among them upon Mount Sinai, v. 10. we find by the Execution of his Commission, that it implied only a solemn declaration that they should be ready to meet the Lord, v. 14, 15. And *Moses, went down from the Mount, and sanctified the People, and said, Be ready against the third day.*

And the same no doubt was the design

sign of the Prophet *Joel* in this place, where addressing himself, as is plain, to the Elders of the Jews, to them to whom the Authority belonged, to *Blow the Trumpet in Zion*: call a *solemn Assembly*, i. e. to appoint the Fast, that they should *Sanctifie the Congregation*. His meaning must be, that they should command the People to be ready against the day of the Solemnity to lay aside all other business, and attend the Service of the Lord in the Congregation. Levit. 23.  
.28, 30

But though this therefore be the literal import of this phrase; and perhaps all that was required of them to whom the Prophet spoke, the rulers and Governors of the People; yet both the design of this Warning, and the particular explication of the Expression, almost always understood of that special sort of Preparation, which consisted in cleansing and purifying themselves, call upon us, Exod. 29. v.  
33, 36,  
37, &c. not only to be ready to assemble our selves on the day of the Fast, but so to prepare our selves.

selves too, that we maybe fit for the Celebration.

It was the great care of God Almighty under the Law, that upon all such solemn Assembling as this; the People should be *Sanctified* before they came to the Congregation, and then at least be free from any present guilt, when they met to implore the Forgiveness of their past sins.

Num. 11.

18.

Exod. 19.

14, 15.

Genes. 35.2.

Num. 19.

Hence we find what strict charges they had to *purifie themselves, to wash or to change their Clothes, to abstain even from law-ful pleasures in which there might only seem to be a Pollution*; and when this was done, what care the Priests took to *sanctifie the Congregation, i.e. to reconcile the People, by their solemn forms of Expiation to God.*

Jer. 13.

And sure our care to prepare our selves ought to be no less, because we are now no longer under the *pedagogy* of these Ceremonies. And if the Prophet Joel here requires it, even of the Jews themselves, that they should, though  
not

not omit the other, yet rather be careful to make that preparation of a spiritual Holiness, which these shadows typified; we certainly much more must resolve at this time to lay aside every accursed thing, and *rent our hearts and not our garments, and turn unto the Lord our God.*

So that here then it will be our business diligently to reflect, how we are prepared this day to *sanctifie the Fast.*

Have we seriously repented of those sins that once provoked the Justice of Heaven to appear, as on this day, to our Confusion; and which, if our Piety does nothing to prevent it, will again return to our greater desolation?

Is there any one amongst us, that by the malignity of his Nature, the desperateness of his Fortunes, or a misguided Zeal, has been actually concern'd in this great guilt, or otherwise partaken in the crime of it, by assisting, or encouraging, or even approving the doing it? Is there any one now present, who though un-

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concern'd

concern'd in that black Parricide, is yet involved in any of those Principles that led to it? Has assisted, approved, or encouraged those new Rebels, the Progeny of the same *Old Cause*, that have again so lately endeavour'd to crown the Son with the like glory their ancestors did the Father? Let me beseech them either to *sanctifie the fast with us*, or not to joyn in the Celebration: Let them here sacrifice this day all such villainous thoughts, these practices, and these principles: Let them offer up all those interests and resentments, that ever have, or ever may involve them in so great Impiety. And having thus *washed their cloths*, by a Repentance for what is past, Let them to compleat the *Sanctification*, here engage themselves for the time to come, actually to joyn in the contrary duties of Loyalty and Obedience to their King; resolving evermore to disown all such Men and such Principles, as shall ever hereafter endeavour to engage them

them in the like detestable Conspiracies.

Without this all our Fasting and humiliation will stand us in little stead; our Assemblies, even this solemn meeting will be so far from appeasing, that it will kindle God's anger to a yet higher degree against us. In vain shall we cry every man to his God, whilest such Jonases are embarked in the same Cause with us. But let us cast out the man for whose sake all these Evils are come upon us; Let us examine ours souls that no accursed thing may remain in them; then shall the Storms of our Civil Confusions cease, when we have sacrificed these Enemies to Heaven and our own Peace: Religion and Loyalty shall revive amongst us; our Country shall again flourish as a City that is at Unity within it self; Peace shall be within our Walls, and Righteousness within our Palaces; Then shall the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord; and shall worship in his House with a holy [and united] Worship.

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v.5.

*The Throne of Judgement shall be established; even the Throne of the House of David for Ever and Ever.*

Thus shall we render this great Solemnity truly such a *Fast as the Lord hath chosen*; Our weeping and our mourning shall come up before him as the Incense, acceptable in his sight: he will receive our Confessions with Favour, and mercy, and answer our requests with Peace and security.

I shall say no more to the Second particular, The Preparation with which we ought to sanctify the Fast: Our last Business now to be considered, is,

III. Being thus prepared, How we ought to keep the Fast.

And for this it is certainly impossible to pursue any better method, than that form of Confession the Prophet *Joel* has here proposed to the *Jews*; viz. To implore the favour and mercies of Heaven.

I. For



1. For the forgiveness of this great sin:  
*Spare thy People, O Lord.*

2. That our miseries may never be  
turned by the Application of wicked  
men; either,

1. To the Scandal of God's People:  
*And give not thine Heritage to reproach:*  
Or,

2. To the ruin of our Church or State:  
*That the Heathen should rule over them:*  
Or,

3. Finally, To the Reproach of God's  
Providence: *Wherefore should they say a-*  
*mong the People, Where is their God?*

1. We must implore the Favours and  
mercy of Heaven for the forgiveness  
of this great sin: *Spare thy people, O*  
*Lord.*

And here we are arrived at the proper  
Business.

business of this day ; to implore the pardon of a crime which my soul trembles to remember, and which I should doubt had exceeded the power of any Repentance to expiate, had not the Apostles left us an Example, by exhorting the Jews to labour for a forgiveness even of their crucifying the Lord of Glory.

For indeed, What floods of tears can ever be sufficient to wash off the stain of so much Innocent and Royal Blood, as our late civil confusions have brought upon us? Is it possible for our sorrow ever to equal those Violences and Oppressions, those Ruines and Devastations, the Murders, the Sacrileges, those Sins which our Eyes have seen, and which it may be our Hands have acted? How shall I recount the most flourishing of States brought to Desolation? A Church, the Envy and Hatred of Hell, the Delight of its Friends, and Terror of its Enemies; So pure and orthodox its Canons and Confession, so learned the Pens,  
so

so exemplary the Lives of its Professors, and when the fiery tryal came on, so firm and constant their Sufferings, that the most Primitive Christians could not have desired any thing more conformable to their own Piety; persecuted, profaned, thrown down by Enthusiastick Zeal, and a thorough Reformation: In a word, a King, so Primitive too, that He seem'd to have revived some *Constantine*, or *Theodosius*, or *Marcian* again among us; so just and brave, that he was worthy to have ruled, though he had not been born to Empire: Cut off by the villainy of his own Subjects; a Martyr to his Religion, a Sacrifice to his Country, and the Everlasting reproach as well as guilt of both.

This is but a light description of that sin, which we are here assembled to commemorate and to lament; and I must beg leave to add yet more; For however it will easily be imagined that all this wickedness could not be accomplished  
but

but through innumerable Crimes, which neither can any tongue express, nor any thoughts conceive, yet such unusual Villainies then acted us; which Antiquity never knew, nor will Posterity believe; that we might well be esteemed to fail in that duty which this Fast requires, should we not make some more solemn and particular remembrance of them.

Through what treachery did our Anointed first fall into their nets? When those perfidious men, to whose trust he had committed his Sacred Person, contrary to all the Laws of Nature and Nations as *themselves*, whilst not yet Villains enough to commit so black a treachery, *confess'd* contrary to all the sentiments of Honour, and dictates of Religion, sold him into the hands of his Enemies, who even then design'd his destruction? With a supplication indeed for his security, but such as a Popish Inquisitor uses when he delivers the poor Heretick to the secular power, intreats for a  
life

life, which he both desires may not, and which he infallibly knows shall not be granted.

And accordingly, How soon did all things conspire to his destruction? When the violence of the Faction broke off those Treaties that had almost restored us to our peace: The lower House, that had usurped the power of the Government it self before, now becomes its self reformed; And to accomplish a Villainy, which an ordinary Malignant's conscience was not thought proof enough to go through with, only a few confiding men were to be trusted with so desperate a design; A Court of Justice was erected, and Majesty arraigned to answer for treason committed against his own Rebels.

How shall I recount the wickedness of their process? A tryal only to make the condemnation the more grievous for being the more solemn and publick. In which their King was not allowed

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that

that liberty of defence which every ordinary Subject claims as his right, and which they themselves enjoyed, for this notorious, this undeniable Conspiracy : Nay in which their President durst plainly tell his Sacred Majesty , *That he was now in a Court where reason was not to be heard.*

With what Noise and Insults was all the action carried on ? When the clamours of the people for Justice first, and then for Execution , was the only voice that was heard in our Streets : And as if with our Loyalty all sence both of Religion and Humanity had been lost too , Some spit in his Royal Face as he past by ; Others press'd upon Him with the smoak of their Tabaco , for which they knew he had a particular aversion, and even threw their Pipes in his way : The least expression of Reverence to Him , was punished with all the Violence a populer fury could execute ; And One, who, more compassionate than the

the rest, only wish'd him well, was kill'd upon the place for his unseasonable piety. \

When at last the fatal Sentence was pronounced ; How hardly were they brought to allow him any Assistance to prepare him for his death ? His prayers continually disturbed by the Rudeness of those Guards that intruded upon his most secret retirements: His last thoughts diverted with Propositions to save his Life, which they knew neither Honour nor Conscience would permit him to receive. What Shouts, what Acclamations, when the cruel stroke was given that finished the Tragedy ? How greedily did they thirst after his Blood, when some plunged their hands into his wound ; Others dipt their staves in it. The very block on which he rested his Sacred Head cut in pieces, that every one might satisfy his cruelty with some memorial of their villainy ; and even the very boards and Earth Stain'd with his

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blood,

blood, distributed as a mark whereby to triumph over his fall.

And here one would have expected a conclusion of their guilt, and that they should at least have desisted to pursue him now he was dead, and no longer in a condition to oppose their designs. But alas! their malice extended beyond his Execution; and as they had condemned him for a *Malefactor*; so they resolved he should not even in his burial be honoured as a *King*. How small was the expence they prescribed for his Interment: with what Privacy was it transacted; and He who had been the most Zealous defender of the rights and Ceremonies of the Church in his life, not allowed the least usage of them at his Funeral now he was dead.

And here then, let our own Consciences speak; or if we fear they may be too partial, let the Censures of the World tell us; Was there ever Villainy like unto this guilt with which it pleased God  
to



to punish the sins of his People? Let us search the Records of Antiquity, Let us ask of the Generations that are past, and Let us ask from one end of the Heaven even to the other, if ever any thing was committed amongst them that can parallel this impiety. That a Christian Kingdom should break through all those bonds of duty and obedience, which the more righteous Heathens have revered as Sacred and Inviolable. That so many Oaths, and Vows, repeated with that Frequency, taken with that Solemnity, should all be insufficient to preserve our Fidelity. That *Religion* and *Reformation*, two things, than which none can be more excellent in themselves, nor are any more easily and more dangerously abused, should be able to cheat us into Wickedness, which the barbarous *Scythians* never heard of, and which when it was told them they were scandalized at the report. Lastly, that not only the *Honour of God* should be pretended for  
the.

the Motive, but even *his Assistance* be desired, and even affirm'd to have been received in the execution of all this great sin. This is that circumstance which raises our crime to the highest pitch of guilt, and makes us even afraid to look up to Heaven for the pardon of this sin, whose assistance we have so often, and so impudently implored to the commission of it.

Yet since it has pleased God to draw us at last out of the blindness our fury had involved us in, let us take this blessing for our Earnest, that he has not yet totally forsaken us, but as He has delivered us from the Evil, so if even now we return unto him, He will free us from the guilt too of our Sins. Only let our Repentance be as sincere, as our Crimes have been provoking; *Who can tell but he may yet repent, return, and leave a blessing behind him?*

But it is not only this pardon, which we are this day to implore at his Hands:  
Our

Our Text carries us on to yet other Petitions; that being justified before God, we may also prepare the way to take off the reproach of Man, and clear our selves in the sight of both together. This brings me to the second part of the Holy Prophet's prayer, *Give not thine Heritage to reproach.*

2. That this great Sin may never turn, by the Application of wicked Men, to the Scandal and Reproach of us or our Religion.

How necessary this part of the Petition is to us, I could wish the publick declarations of the whole World did not too loudly speak. The Monuments are still extant that shew us, how we were become a Scandal and a Proverb to all the Nations round about us. Nay that nothing might be wanting to illustrate the Horrour of this Villainy, it scandalized even our own selves too; and those very Factions, that brought their King to his ruin,

ruin, by the secret Orders of Heaven, themselves lamented his fall, and confessed the Impiety. How loudly did his praises now sound from those Pulpits, that had bid defiance to Him and his Party heretofore? *The Covenant* its self was taught to change its Voice, and from a *Band of Rebellion* to *destroy the Government*, was shewn to be a *League of Loyalty* to preserve the King.

Scandalous no doubt was the sin, and that villainy detestable indeed to all good Men, which thus forcibly stagger'd the Consciencs of these Separatists, by Nature formed, by Principle bred up to Faction, and now by above eight years practice, one might have thought sufficiently instructed in Rebellion, not to startle at a guilt they had themselves so Zealously pursued. And how shall We escape the common reproach, who have been so unhappily united in a Country and Society, that has produced such Monsters? Blessed be God who has left us a  
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Mark of distinction to prevent so great a Slander : And amidst all our regret for the fatal Villainy of this day, we cannot but joy and glory in this, that not any of our Church was involved in this guilt, or ever possibly can be in the like.

Let the Actions of our Predecessors speak our Innocence for what is past. Their sufferings are as known, as the Violence of their Enemies has been notorious. Their Loyal writings, in the midst of a prosperous Rebellion, still shew us, not only the Righteousness of their Cause, but even their readiness to assert it in defiance of danger. And our own assembling at this time, to detest the Principles, no less than to bewail the Practices, of those Conspiratours, declares that we are not at all degenerate, but still maintain the same Opposition to that Faction, who under the Cloak of Reformation, have scandalized the very name of Protestant, and by a sad Experience taught us, that Kings may be proscribed

in other places besides Rome, and that a Fanatick has as strong an Arm to lift up against a Prince's life, as the stoutest Jesuit or Jacobin can boast of.

Let our Principles be examined ; Let the most accurate Inquisition pass upon our writings ; Let the Solemnity of our Piety for the death of our late Sovereign , and the firmness, we have again had opportunity too much to shew , of our Zeal and Loyalty to our present King ; And if all this be not sufficient, Let the malice of those Men who acted this Villainy , that in those days involved the Church in the ruin of its Defender , and hath again endeavoured once more to put down Her that they might come the more advantageously to strike at Him ; Let these shew that we have no part nor Inheritance with them: Only that as the Royal Martyr of this day, not only commanded his Son with his last breath to forgive them , but Himself prayed for their conversion ; so will we never cease

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as faithfully to execute his Will, as that Son has done it; and with the same Piety that he has pardoned the Fact, beseech God to bring them to Repentance too for it.

These are our Prayers, such our affections towards them; May the God of Heaven answer our Requests, and give us at last both the Satisfaction and the Security of beholding their Conversion. But if the greatness of Their sins prevent the Effect we so much desire of our present Offerings, we must then beg leave to go on with Our Text, to another address to secure our selves; The third particular now to be spoken to; *And give not thine Heritage to reproach, that the Heathen should rule over Them.*

3. That our own sins at least, may never bring us to the like ruin; either of our Church or State; nor Evermore permit these men, as they have therefore done, to prevail against us.



And this too is a Petition no less proper to our present Circumstances, than the preceding requests have been but too applicable to the memory of our past Evils. Our sins, which called down that last Vengeance upon us, are still as heinous and universal to provoke a new one. Our Divisions are yet greater; and and that fertile Brood of Factions, which that unnatural War produced, and which no Country or Antiquity ever heard of before, still continue more fatally, and more dangerously to distract us.

We have again seen the Government divided against it self: The People have been blown up into a new Ferment; The Bishops and Councillours have again been Resolved to be Popishly affected; Nay, the very Militia has been once more attempted, and they were no doubt *Confiding men* too into whose hands it should have again been put. And when all this would not do, New designs have been laid

laid to seize that Government by *Violence*, they could not gain by *Petition*. How was his Sacred Majesty almost caught in their traps? The destruction so well laid, that it had been impossible to have escaped it; and Providence was forced to act almost a Miracle to prevent it.

And now when our danger has again so nigh overtaken us, certainly He must be very unsensible of the former Evils, that can think Himself unconcerned at such a time as this, to pray against the Future. Let the Miseries that we suffered, and the sins that were committed in those days, when *the Heathen, i. e.* these Enemies to our Church and State, ruled over us, be remembered: Was there *Ever Sorrow like unto our Sorrow, wherewith* Lam. 1. 12. *the Lord afflicted us in those days of his fierce Anger?* I have before given you some general Prospect of our Calamities at this time, and your own Knowledge will save me the regret of repeating to you any more. *How did our Cities become Solitary,* Lam. 1. 11. *that*

Lam. 2. 6.

that were full of people? Our Country, Once great among the Nations, How did she become Tributary, even to her own Vassals? Our King, the Anointed of the Lord, fell by their hand; Our Princes were led into Captivity; Our Churches, the Places of our Assemblies, were profaned; The solemn Feasts and days, were forgotten in our Zion, and God in the Indignation of his anger, despised both the King and the Priest.

And all this we have had but too great cause to fear, may again return upon us. Yet since it has pleased the Almighty to stop the Vengeance, and command the destroying Angel to suspend the Blow, if not to sheath his Sword, and give us still longer respite to repent, and secure our selves; Let the Consideration of this danger provoke us not to neglect the Opportunity. Let our Repentance at this time be so sincere, that it may not only obtain our pardon for Past Offences, but prevail with Heaven to prevent our Impending dangers. Let

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us no more give our Enemies this advantage against us, to force the Almighty to withdraw *his presence* from amongst us, and leave us again to engage them upon equal Terms: But let our lives and our prayers both join in the Request, to save and to defend us, *Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thine Heritage to reproach; that the Heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the People, Where is there God?* Exod. 33. 15.

This is the last Consideration, which the Method of our Text now calls us to conclude with.

4. That neither the miseries we have suffered, nor the dangers and confusions we yet labour under, may by the Censures of wicked men ever turn to the reproach of God's Providence, any more than of our own Church or Cause. *Wherefore should they say among the People, Where is their God?*

It is not to be doubted but that this  
sarcastick

- Deut. 28. sarcastick Exprobration was that reproach, which Joel had before pray'd that God would not suffer *his Heritage* to be exposed to. He had promised in his Law to supply them with plenty of Food, and to bless their Victuals with Increase: *That their houses should be full of all manner of store; their Fields also should stand so thick with Corn, that they should laugh and sing.* Well therefore might they fear the reproach of the *Heathen*, when instead of this plenty, they should be forced to go and seek for necessary nourishment of them, whom they excluded from these promises; who no doubt would be forward enough to make a By-word of them, and insult over their pretences, as if their God either could not, or would not relieve them. Is this the People that hath the Lord for their God? Behold, Is not the meat cut off before their Eyes? Their Vine laid waste? and the Branches of their figtree made white? Their seed is rotten under their clods, their Garners are made desolate, the Barns broken down, because the  
corn
- Joel. 1. 16.  
7.  
17.

corn is withered. How do the beasts groan because they have no pasture? for the rivers of Water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness. Where is now their God to pity them? And where is the Lord to be jealous for his Inheritance?

This was their Reproach, the Scandal of themselves, and their Religion, which the Prophet so much feared, and so earnestly exhorted them to pray against: and would to God we our selves this day had not too great cause to fear the like. Witness, O ye pious and excellent Souls, what scornings and reviling to your selves and your Religion did ye then bear, when being forced from that plenty and tranquility you once enjoyed, you became scattered abroad among the Heathen and underwent their reproaches, more grievous and sensible than all the other miseries and calamities of your cruel exile!

But what need I look back to the

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times

times that are past when our own continue to afford us so plain an Application. How far both our late calamities, and our present distractions have given occasion to the Enemy to triumph in our misfortunes, as if they were not only the mark of our own sins, but even an argument of the common illness of our Cause too, this alone may be sufficient to shew, that the Romanists not only hope from them, to see this Ferment one day settle among us into down right Popery again; but even at this day make this the great, and indeed it must be confessed the strongest, prejudice against the Reformation, that since we have thrown off our Obedience to that Church, we have run so many and different ways of Errour, and are yet at such distance from one another, as plainly shew there is no truth nor certainty to be found for us, but only in our return to them again.

I shall not here enquire into the Goodness of the *Consequence*,  
but



but must needs say I could wish, there were not too much Truth and scandal in the *Premises*: And who can tell whether, since any lesser Judgements have been ineffectual to reclaim us, God may not at last punish us with this Blindness, and whilst we refuse to submit to the easie and lawful power of his Church and his Anointed, bring us once more under the intolerable Yoke of that usurped authority, from whose Slavery both our Country and our Consciences are now so happily asserted.

This I am sure we have too much deserved, and may therefore justly have but too great Cause to fear. Only my hope is, that whatever our own demerits are, yet the Innocence of our Church shall still provoke God's providence to defend her: And that our deliverance, as at this time, from our Enemies, shall always disappoint such fatal expectations, and convince them,

that though we have sinned, yet are we his People ; That he chastises us as Children, not punishes us as his Enemies ; and is still our God , though angry and provoked.

How great is the demonstration of his mercy and loving-kindness , that we even now continue a Church and People , as at this day ? What Miracles did  
Psal. 126. 1. he work to turn again the Captivity of our Zion, and deliver both us and our King from those Usurpers that so long had triumphed over both ? Has not the Almighty shewn himself in our defence, who but so lately has delivered us both from Popish and Fanatick Conspiracies ? Let them ask *where is their God*, that have not known by what singular and unexpected means these designs were both Discover'd and Disappointed ? And though it pleases God still to leave *these men like the Canaanites in the Land*, to try, and to prove us, and which indeed but too much fulfil their character of being scourges

ges to our sides, and thornes in our Eyes : Yet *Joel. 23. 13.* has he set bounds to their designs, which they have not been able to pass, and which we trust they never shall exceed, to ruine and destroy us.

Yet since both our peace and security are still in such danger through their rage and their devices; Let us endeavour not less by our Piety than our Policies, to countermine them. Let us engage the Assistance of Heaven by the excellency of our Lives, as well as the justice of our Cause, to oppose their attempts; Let us exceed them as much in the Sincerity of our Righteousness, as they have done all others in the outward Pretences and Hypocrisie of theirs. Let us keep this day the fast which the Lord hath chosen; to break the bonds of wickedness; to have pity on the distressed; and to execute judgement and justice in the gates. *Joel. 2. 12.* Let us turn unto the Lord our God with all our hearts, with weeping, and with fasting, and with mourning; and let us rent our hearts,  
and

and not our garments, and let us say,

*Spare thy People ; O Lord, and give not  
thine Heritage to reproach ; that the Heathen  
should rule over them: wherefore should they  
say among the people, Where is their God ?*

Joel. 2. 18.

Ma. 1. 26, 27.

*Then will the Lord be jealous for his Peo-  
ple, and awake for his Inheritance : He will  
restore us our Judges as at the first, and our  
Counsellours as at the beginning. Zion shall be  
redeemed with judgment, and her converts with  
righteousness : They shall be ashamed and con-  
founded that seek her destruction : but for  
his Church and his Anointed, they shall  
be preserved for evermore.*

*Which God of his Infinite mercy grant,  
for his dear Son Jesus Christ's Sake.  
Amen.*

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